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ABSTRACT

A literature review was conducted to assess the psychological aspects of race development among children from different ethnic groups. It examines whether children differ in their development as a function of their own ethnic group. An explanation is offered of how these developing preferences affect young children's self-esteem and interaction patterns. The role of the environment and cognitive factors is also analyzed. Ways to develop effective intervention programs aimed at reducing racial stereotyping and prejudice is considered. The review is divided into five sections. Section 1 reviews the empirical findings about the racial categories and societal evaluations attached to them, which children become aware of in the preschool years. Section 2 describes the studies on children's racial attitudes and the effects of these attitudes on their self-esteem and social interactions. Section 3 examines the salience of race in relation to other social categories and theories employed to explain the effects of salience. Section 4 discusses the mechanisms by which racial knowledge and attitudes are transmitted to children and how these mechanisms influence social development. Section 5 discusses the limitations of the studies and the direction of future research. (Contains 94 references.) (JDM)

Development of Racial Attitudes and Identity in Children:

A Review of the Literature

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This manuscript is part of a review essay completed to partially fulfill the first author's requirements for the doctoral degree in the Department of Human Development and Family Life at the University of Kansas under the supervision of the second author. Jocelyn Freeman Bonvillain is an assistant professor in the Department of Psychology and Rehabilitation Counseling at Southern University and A&M College. Aletha C. Huston is a professor in the Department of Human Ecology, Univesity of Texas at Austin. Correspondence concerning this manuscript should be addressed to Jocelyn Freeman Bonvillain, Department of Psychology and Rehabilitation Counseling, Southern University and A&M College, 317 Blanks Hall, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70813. Electronic mail may be sent via Internet to jfreeman@subr.edu

Abstract

The purpose of this review is to discuss how and when psychological aspects of race develop among children from different ethnic groups and whether children differ in their development as a function of their own ethnic group. The way these developing preferences affect young children's self-esteem and interaction patterns is then discussed. Finally, the role of environmental and cognitive factors is considered with attention to ways of developing effective intervention programs aimed at reducing racial stereotyping/prejudice.

This review is divided into five sections. Section one reviews the empirical findings that children become aware both of racial categories and of the societal evaluations attached to them during the preschool years. In section two, studies of children's racial attitudes and the effects of these attitudes on self-esteem and social interaction are described. Section three examines the salience of race in relation to other social categories and theories employed to explain the effects of salience. Section four discusses the mechanisms by which racial knowledge and attitudes are transmitted to children and how these mechanisms influence social development. The review concludes in section five by discussing the limitations of the studies and the direction of future research in this area.

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Development of Racial Attitudes and Identity in Children:

A Review of the Literature

How does stereotyping about people of different races and skin tones in young children emerge? This question has been examined for over 60 years by psychologists. This research has been primarily descriptive in nature and has outlined age-related changes in young children's thoughts about Black and White people.

Racial prejudice has been studied extensively by psychologists since the 1940s. The most salient characteristic of prejudice is its negative, hateful quality. More precisely, racial prejudice refers to an organized predisposition to respond in an unfavorable manner toward people because of their ethnic affiliation (Aboud, 1988). The causes of racial prejudice are complex involving social, affective and cognitive variables (Bigler & Liben, 1993). Some of the mechanisms attributed to the development of racial prejudice among children have included environmental-learning factors (Morland, 1958; Porter, 1971) and cognitive factors (Aboud, 1988; Allport, 1954; Katz, 1982; 1983).

One variable that can lead to racial prejudice or racial attitudes is racial stereotyping. Racial stereotyping is defined as the generalized attribution of a set of personal characteristics to members of a racial/ethnic group (Aboud, 1988).

For more than six decades, research has appeared sporadically investigating children's psychological responses to race and ethnic groups. This review is concerned with how and when these psychological aspects of race develop among children from different ethnic groups and whether children differ in their development as a function of their own ethnic group. The way these developing preferences affect young children's self-esteem and interaction patterns is then discussed. Finally, the role of environmental and cognitive factors is considered with attention to ways of developing effective intervention programs aimed at reducing racial

stereotyping/prejudice.

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Studies of Racial Awareness

Race is a social category based partly on such physical characteristics as skin color, hair color and texture, and facial features. Race awareness refers to a conscious recognition of race in individuals and groups based on obvious physical attributes (Aboud, 1988).

Race awareness is often used in such a general sense that it is difficult to specify exactly what people mean by it and how it is defined in research studies. Racial awareness is defined by most investigators as knowledge of both the visible difference between racial categories and the perceptual cues by which one classifies people into these divisions (Porter, 1971). Applying a racial label correctly or identifying which person is associated with a given racial label is usually measured by showing pictures or dolls from different racial groups and asking the child to point to, for example, the White, the Black or the Colored person.

When do Children become Aware of Race?

Many studies have been concerned with the age at which children realize that certain physical differences have social meaning. Evidence available suggests that by 3 or 4 years of age many children are aware of differences in skin color and other racial cues and that this awareness increases with age.

In a classic study in a Northeastern urban community, Goodman (1952) studied Black and White 4-year-old nursery school children's awareness of race. In the course of four or five interviews children were given four sets of projective materials: (1) a set of jigsaw puzzles, (2) a doll house with its furnishings and miniature doll families, (3) a set of pictures and clay, and (4) a collection of dolls of several types. The results revealed that 85% of the Black and White children showed a medium to high level of awareness. Her conclusions were based largely on what the children did and said while they played with the toys and looked at the pictures. Because all children were the same age the investigator was unable to say anything about the age differences in racial knowledge during the preschool period.

Clark and Clark (1963) studied the development of racial awareness in northern and southern Black children. Black children ranging in ages 3 to 7 years participated in this study. One group of children (southern group) were tested in segregated nursery schools and public schools in Arkansas. They had no experience in racially mixed school situations. A second group (northern group) was tested in racially mixed nursery and public schools of Massachusetts. The children in both groups varied in skin color: light, medium, dark. The subjects were presented with four dolls, identical in every respect except skin color. Two of these dolls were brown with black hair and two were white with yellow hair. The children were asked to choose among the

dolls in answer to the requests: (1) "Give me the white doll", (2) "Give me the colored doll", and (3) "Give me the Negro doll". These children reacted with strong awareness of skin color. Among 3-year-old Black children in both northern and southern communities, more than 75% chose the correct doll for the labels "white" and "Colored". Among 4- to 7-year-old Black children, an increasingly greater number made the correct choices. When asked to give the experimenter the white doll, 94% of the children chose the white doll; 93% of them chose the brown doll when asked to give the "Colored" doll; and 72% chose the brown doll when asked to give the "Negro" doll.

Mahan (1976) examined 7-year-old Black and 3- to 5-year-old White children's racial awareness. Children were shown a black doll and a white doll and asked questions pertaining to their awareness of race. All Black children and all but two White children correctly labeled the white and black dolls respectively.

These studies showed that a significant proportion of Black and White children as young as 3 are aware of differences in skin color and this proportion increases with age. By 6 and 7 years, children reach close to 100 percent accuracy when identifying Whites and Blacks.

As early as age 3 children are able to identify Black and White people based on obvious physical cues, but how do they first become aware that certain physical differences have social meaning? Children's perceptual keenness and growth of logic may determine when differences are noted and given significance.

When do Children become Aware of Race as a Construct of Self?

Racial self-identification refers to the realization that one is a member of a racial group, possessing attributes common to that racial group. The basic component of racial self-

identification is describing oneself in terms of a critical racial attribute, for example, a label or another attribute that defines rather than merely describes the racial group (Aboud, 1988).

Research has shown that children become aware of differences among racial groups before they are able to identify themselves with their own racial group. The most consistent findings in the studies on racial self-awareness are that children become aware of racial groups before identifying themselves with their own group and that White and light-skinned children classify themselves more accurately than Black and dark-skinned children. Clark and Clark (1963) studied the ability of northern and southern black children to identify themselves in racial terms. The children were asked to point to the doll "which is most like you". Approximately two-thirds of all the children answered correctly. Correct answers were more frequent among the older children. Only 37% of the 3-year-olds but 87% of the 7-year-olds responded accurately compared to more than 75% of the 3 year olds who correctly labeled the different racial groups.

Mahan (1976) found that both groups of Black and White children were not as clear about their own self-identity ("Give me the doll that looks like you") compared to identifying racial groups. Twenty-two Black children were correct while three were incorrect whereas all the Black children correctly labeled the white and black doll. Ten of the White children chose the correct doll, while four chose the incorrect one compared to thirteen of them who correctly labeled the dolls.

The conclusion that children are aware of racial differences among groups before they are able to identify themselves with their racial group should be taken with caution since the only dolls available had dark brown skin or white skin. A light-skinned Black child might reasonably have doubts about which doll to choose.

In some studies, White children classified themselves more accurately than Black children. Sesame Street Research (1990) examined race self-awareness in Black and White preschool children. When children were presented with a set of crayons and asked to point to the color that represented their skin color 37% of the Black children chose the black color and 20% chose the brown color compared to 63% of the White children who chose the white color and 7% who chose the pink color. When asked "what crayon is most like you" 60% of the Black children chose the tan, brown or black crayon and 77% of the White children chose the white or peach crayon.

Similar findings occurred in other countries where light-skinned children more accurately identified themselves than dark-skinned children. Munitz, Priel, and Henik (1985) investigated self-color identification among light-skinned Israeli-born and Ethiopian-born children in kindergarten and first- or second-grade. Self-color identification was measured using the doll test and a drawing of one's self in color. In the original dolls test there was a set of four dolls, two black and two white, identical in all other respects. The child was presented with questions, and asked to choose the doll that corresponded to the description in the question. The second measure was a special elaboration of the Draw A Person Technique. The children were given white paper, two color pens (one pinkish-tan and the other dark-brown) and asked to draw a girl (boy) like them. When asked to choose a doll or a color for their self-drawing, both origin and age affected their choice. Ethiopian-born children misidentified themselves more frequently than Israeli-born children on both color choices and doll choices. Self-color identifications became more realistic (i.e., Israeli-born children described themselves as light-skinned and Ethiopian-born children described themselves as dark-skinned) with increasing age.

In sum, the findings suggest that classification of one's self by race follows the awareness

of racial group differences, especially for dark-skinned children, and that correct identification of self increases with age.

What Cues do Children Use?

The studies reviewed thus far demonstrate that by 3 to 5 years of age children develop awareness of race with respect to black and white stimuli. However, past studies have failed to demonstrate what types of cues are most important in defining race for children. Black and White children may use physical features other than skin color to distinguish Blacks from Whites. Sorce (1979) investigated the salient cues used to distinguish Blacks from Whites and attempted to determine whether Black and White children utilize the same cues to discriminate between their races. Two groups of preschool children ranging from 3 to 5 years of age from Wisconsin were tested. The groups included White children from a racially segregated neighborhood and school, and White and Black children from an integrated neighborhood and school.

The stimuli consisted of a series of sketches of a male face displaying a variety of racial characteristics (skin color, physiognomy) and a nonracial feature (color of shirt collar). Caucasian features included pinkish-tan skin; yellow, slightly wavy hair; blue eyes, narrow nose; and thin lips. Black features included medium-brown skin; black, coarse, and tightly curled hair; brown eyes; wider nose; and thicker lips. These six features were reduced to three groups: (1) skin color, (2) hair and eye region, and (3) nose and mouth region. A total of eight permutations were possible, resulting in one pose displaying all three categories of black characteristics, one pose displaying all three categories of white features, and six poses depicting the various interracial combinations. In addition, one nonracial feature, shirt color, was varied, with four sketches depicting green shirts and the remaining four, orange shirts.

To determine whether children could differentiate perceptually between each of the three racial categories, a standard discrimination task was administered. On the first trial, two sketches were presented which were identical in all features except for the first racial category -- skin color. The child was asked to look at both pictures and state whether they were the same or different. If the child noticed a difference, they were asked to state how the pictures differed. The second and third trials paralleled the first trial except that only the hair and eye regions varied on trial two, and only nose and mouth characteristics differed on trial three.

To determine whether the children also believed that these racial characteristics provided significant information for distinguishing between groups of people, a classification task was administered. Children were given all eight sketches and directed to sort them into two piles so that the items in each pile were similar. After the sort, children were asked to explain how the cards are the same. When one grouping was completed the cards were reshuffled and children were asked to repeat the task sorting a different way. The task was continued until the children indicated that no new groupings were possible.

For both Black and White children, skin color was the easiest perceptual feature to discriminate, with hair and eye features more difficult, and nose and mouth characteristics most difficult. When children were asked to sort and explain the cards that were similar, they used the hair and eye racial criteria more than they used the skin color criterion.

This indicates that for preschool children, skin color discrimination alone may not be a valid measure of racial awareness. Even though children in this study demonstrated that skin color was the easiest perceptual feature to discriminate, they seemed to ignore skin color when asked to sort the racial stimuli in ways they felt were meaningful.

Summary

Investigations of the development of racial concept indicate that awareness of racial differences occurs around the preschool years and increases with age. Children first show their awareness between 3 and 4 years of age when a significantly large proportion of them can accurately point to people who are black and white. By 6 and 7 years the children reach close to 100% accuracy when identifying Whites and Blacks. Children's identification of their own racial group closely parallels the awareness of other persons' race, but awareness of racial group differences is typically learned first. There is no evidence that Black and White children differ in the age at which they acquire racial awareness. However, their racial self-identification does differ. White and light-skinned children identify themselves more accurately than do Black and dark-skinned children. Few studies have examined what types of cues Black and White children may use other than skin color when distinguishing differences between Blacks and Whites. Studies that have examined more than one physical feature have found that children use more than one racial cue when discriminating among racial groups. Therefore, studies that included only skin color as a cue failed to demonstrate fully whether or when children understand the perceptual cues for race. Perhaps more important, there is little indication that children understand race as a social category and its social ramifications.

Studies of Racial Attitudes and Preference

Racial attitudes are learned predispositions to respond to people from an ethnic group in a positive or negative way. Attitudes summarize past experience and predict or direct future actions (Coon, 1986). Children not only become aware of race in the preschool years, but they also develop attitudes and preferences based on skin color and other racial cues.

There are a number of approaches to the measurement of attitudes. Studies often use racial preference as a measure of attitudes. Racial preference is defined as choosing the racial group that is liked better over another racial group. Preferring one racial group over another is usually measured by showing pictures or dolls from different racial groups and asking children to point to, for example, the White or Black person they like best. Although it is possible to assess attitudes toward racial groups independently of racial preference, most studies have confounded one with the other. Regardless of this procedural problem, it is clear that both are an integral part of children's developing attitudes.

Children Perceive Black Dolls and Blacks as Negative.

A number of studies have demonstrated that children evaluate Blacks negatively and Whites positively. In Clark and Clark's (1963) study Black children were asked the following four questions: (1) "Give me the doll that you like to play with" or "the doll you like best", (2) "Give me the doll that is the nice doll", (3) "Give me the doll that looks bad", and (4) "Give me the doll that is a nice color". Black children often chose the white doll and rejected the black doll.

Several studies supported the Clarks' (1963) findings that children evaluate Blacks negatively and Whites positively, using a variety of testing materials, and within various geographical and social settings (Asher & Allen, 1969; Bigler & Liben, 1993; Clark & Clark, 1940; 1947; Freeman, 1993; Goodman, 1952; 1964; Gopaul-McNicol, 1986; Greenwald & Oppenheim, 1968; Helgerson, 1943; Horowitz, 1936; Kircher & Firby, 1971; Klein, Levin, & Charry, 1979; Lerner & Schroeder, 1975; Morland, 1962; Porter, 1971; Powell-Hopson, 1985; Radke, Sutherland, & Rosenberg, 1950; Radke & Trager, 1950; Stevenson & Stewart, 1958; Taylor, 1966).

Sociocultural variations. The tendency to evaluate the color white positively and the color black negatively is not restricted to the United States. Best, Naylor, and Williams (1975) administered the Color Meaning Test and the Preschool Racial Attitude Measure II to preschool and early school-aged children in France and Italy. They found evidence of positive-white and negative-black bias in both groups, with the French group showing less bias than the Italian group or previous Euro-American samples. Japanese children's evaluations were generally consistent with the findings from investigations with American and European children (Iwawaki, Sonoo, Williams, & Best, 1978).

Gopaul-McNicol (1988) examined racial preference in Black preschool children in New York and Trinidad using the Clark doll test procedure. The majority of Black preschool children in both New York and Trinidad evidenced preference for the white doll, and identified with the white doll. Most of the children chose the black doll as "looking bad." In a similar study, Gopaul-McNicol (1995) investigated the racial preference of Black and White preschool children from 4 islands (Trinidad, Jamaica, Grenada, Barbados) in the West Indies. Children were presented with black and white Cabbage Patch dolls that were identical in every respect except skin color. The standard doll questions by Clark and Clark (1947) and "choose a doll you would like to play with" were asked, along with additional questions. The white doll was selected most of the time in response to the positive questions by the West Indian dark-skinned Black children, light-skinned Black children and White children. The black doll was selected more in response to the negative questions. Most of the children chose to play with the White doll.

Munitz, Priel, and Henik (1985) measured light-skinned Israeli-born and Ethiopian-born children's evaluations of color and racial (skin color) attitudes. The Color Meaning Test (CMT),

modified to fit the children's knowledge and vocabulary, contained presentations of two animals, one white and one black. Children were asked to point to one of the drawings on the basis of an evaluative positive or negative adjective in a story that accompanied the drawings. Skin color preference was measured with an adaptation of the Preschool Racial Attitude Measure (PRAM). A series of six stimulus cards were employed. Each card contained two human figures, one with pinkish-tan skin, the other with dark-brown skin. The child was asked to point to the figure described in a story containing a positive or negative adjective. Most children chose the white color and the light-skinned figures in response to positive adjectives and the black color or dark-skinned figures in response to negative adjectives. Ethiopian-born children showed less tendency to evaluate the white color and light skin positively than the Israeli-born children.

Preference for light-colored skin occurs in nations with a wide range of racial and ethnic groups. One reason may be a pervasive symbolic association of white with "good" and black with "bad". In studies of abstract semantic associations among 23 different cultural groups of male high school students from 20 countries; white was consistently evaluated more positively than black (Adams & Osgood, 1973).

Methodological Issues

The most frequent finding in existing investigations of racial attitudes is that children tend to exhibit preference for white. The bulk of the available evidence on white-positive and black-negative is derived from research based either on a particular type of method, sample or design. There are several limitations in this research.

Validity: Do the tests measure attitudes? The measures used to assess attitudes are valid only if they actually measure what they are supposed to. Racial preference questions have been

interpreted as showing racial attitudes in children, but it is unclear whether these attitudes extend to the full range of racial variations or whether they apply primarily to skin-color variations.

The use of stimulus dolls and photographs. Most of the early studies and many recent ones used baby dolls to represent racial group members. Dolls do not represent people the children would meet; they are toys to be manipulated; white dolls might have been selected out because they are familiar. Baby dolls may have different associations than children and adults. Drawings can be used to show different age groups and to eliminate extraneous factors such as attractiveness. The PRAM, for example, requires children to choose between pairs of people who are identical except for the color of their skin. The test measures attitudes to skin color rather than racial groups.

Forced choices. Most studies include only two racial or skin color groups. Because of this limitation and the use of the forced-choice responses, children appear to like one group and dislike the other. This method does not allow for the possibility that children may like more than one racial group and dislike more than one. The forced choice format has serious drawbacks (Aboud, 1988; Aboud & Skerry, 1984). It does not provide an index of the intensity with which an attitude is held; when a child prefers photographs of White people to those of Black people it is not clear whether the preference shown to each photograph is slight or strong. Forced choice also confounds acceptance of one group with rejection of another. If children prefer the white doll this does not necessarily mean that they reject the black doll: they may like the black doll, but marginally less than the white doll. Finally, this technique gives no indication of the salience of race relative to other characteristics in children's everyday social categorizations.

Cohort effects. Most of the research has examined age differences using a cross-sectional

design in which children from different age groups are compared at one point in time. It is assumed that the attitudes held currently by the older group of children will be held by the younger ones several years later. One problem with cross-sectional designs is that the two groups differ not only in age but also year of birth. Year of birth may coincide with temporal differences in societal influences that arise from historical events that change the climate in which different cohorts grow up.

Atheoretical objectives. One very disappointing limitation of the research is the lack of any theory testing in studies of children's attitudes. Often no attempt was made to examine race as a social category, to study other physical features that serve as racial cues, to compare the different age groups, to correlate identification with attitude, or to examine the effects of other variables such as cognitive changes or parenting attitudes/styles on attitudes.

Social Change

In the 1970s and 1980s studies of doll choices began to document a heightened preference for and identification with the black doll by Black children (Hraba & Grant, 1970; Farrell & Olson, 1983; Mahan, 1976; Winnick & Taylor, 1977). Farrell and Olson (1983) revisited the issue of racial identification and racial preference among dark-skinned and light-skinned Black children. Children in kindergarten were tested on racial identification and racial preferences and compared according to skin color. The children were enrolled in either racially segregated or racially desegregated schools.

The Larson-Olson-Farrell Picture Inventory (LOFPI) consists of eight photograph cutouts much like paper dolls, of a dark-skinned Black, a light-skinned Black, a dark-skinned White, and a light-skinned White of each sex. The items included one identification measure and six preference

measures.

Farrell and Olson (1979) compared their findings with those of Clark and Clark (1940) in order to document the differences in racial identification and preference patterns between the two cohorts. A larger percentage of the dark-skinned Black children in the 1979 study correctly identified themselves by race than did the dark-skinned Black children in the 1940 study, 92% to 77%. Moreover, light-skinned Black children in 1979 demonstrated an even greater difference in identifying themselves as Black, 79% as compared to 20% for their counterparts in the Clark and Clark study.

On the positive and negative preference items, the dark-skinned Black children in the Farrell-Olson study tended to select black and white dolls in both categories. A larger percentage of the Clark and Clark children selected a white doll on the positive statements (65%) than did the Farrell-Olson subjects (47%). The dark-skinned Black subjects in the Clark and Clark study, assigned 77% of their negative preferences to the black dolls while the dark-skinned Black subjects in the Farrell-Olson study assigned only 36% of their negative preferences to this group.

The light-skinned Black children in the Farrell-Olson study were also more egalitarian in their positive and negative preference selections than were the light-skinned Black children studied by Clark and Clark. They selected the black dolls 52% of the time on the positive preference item (48% for the white dolls) and 50% of the time on the negative preference item (50% for the white dolls). This is compared to 24% for the black dolls and 76% for the white dolls on the positive preference items and 86% for the black dolls and 14% for the white dolls on the negative preference item.

It must be acknowledged, however, that these studies used different instruments to

document identification and preference among Black children. Farrell and Olson included a light-skinned black doll that was absent in the Clark and Clark study. This change in instrumentation may have allowed the light-skinned Black children to make more accurate selections.

Hraba and Grant (1970) examined the racial preference of 4- and 8-year-old Black and White children in an interracial setting from Nebraska. The children were presented with four dolls, identical in every respect except skin color. The authors found that the majority of Black children preferred the black dolls. Like the Black children, the majority of the White children preferred the doll of their own race.

Similar results were found by Ward and Braun (1972) who examined the self-esteem and racial preference of 7- and 8-year-old middle-class and lower-class Black children. The children were given the Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Test to measure self-esteem. An adaptation of the Clark Doll Test was used to measure racial preference. The majority of the children preferred the black puppet as the "nice puppet" or the black puppet as the one with the "nice color".

Dutton, Singer, and Devlin (1998) examined the racial preference of fourth grade Black and White children attending either an integrated school, a predominately White school, or a predominately Black school. Children from all the schools chose their own races more often than other races in response to the racial preference questions about whom they would like to be like and who looked most like them.

Branch and Newcombe (1986) examined the development of 4- to 7-year-old Black children's racial attitudes. A multiple-choice form of the doll test and the traditional doll test were used to obtain a measure of the children's preferences. On the Multiple-Choice Doll Test, the child

could choose four figures from an array containing four black choices and four white choices. Both positive and negative attributes were presented.

The older children were significantly more pro-black and anti-white than the younger children on the multiple-choice doll test; the same was true for boys on the Clark Doll Test. The younger boys (4 and 5 years old) showed more white preference than the older boys (6 and 7 years old), although both scores were within the "no preference" range. There was no significant difference between the two age groups in the performance of girls.

Fine and Bowers (1984) replicated the Clark and Clark (1940) study on Black children's racial preferences among 4- to 6-year old children who attended a private Black African-identified school in which messages about black pride pervaded the curriculum, relations with teachers, students and the community. Each child was presented two infant dolls identical in every way except for skin color. Black children were equally likely to prefer a black doll to a white doll. A preference for and identification with the white doll was more characteristic of Black boys than Black girls.

It appears that the massive social transformation in the United States during the period between the 1930s and the 1970s may have resulted in a closing of the gap in the racial identification and racial preference patterns for Black children. The more positive environment--socially and psychologically--occasioned by the black pride/black is beautiful movement and the black activism of the 1960s may have had an impact on what young Black children thought of themselves and their race. The percent choosing the white doll was lower than that in earlier studies suggesting that the emphasis on positive associations with being black in their environment was partially successful in counteracting negative attitudes.

Cognitive Developmental Changes in Categorization

A number of important changes in children's developing cognitions about other people, their descriptions of others as personalities and the inferences they make about others' behavior and internal thoughts occur over childhood and adolescence (Berk, 1991). Children's understanding of others' development has much in common with their developing conceptions of themselves, becoming more psychologically based and increasingly differentiated, well-organized, and integrated with age. Children start to make comparisons among people at about the same time they begin to compare themselves to others.

Children between the ages of 2 and 6 have the ability to classify objects, to put things in sets or types and to use concrete, observable properties, such as color or verbal labels as a basis for classification. During the period between about 6 and 11, children develop the ability to classify objects on multiple criteria simultaneously. Their descriptions of themselves and others also shift from observable physical and behavioral characteristics to more abstract psychological attributes (Shantz, 1983). As they approach early adolescence and adolescence, children extend their concrete operational reasoning abilities to abstract and informal situations that they have not experienced firsthand or that they cannot see or manipulate directly (Berk, 1991).

Age differences. In studies demonstrating that children evaluate black negatively and white positively the age differences are not necessarily monotonic. In the Clark and Clark (1963) study, for example, among 3-year-olds the majority preferred the white doll and rejected the brown doll. The children of 6 and 7, however, showed slightly more frequent preference for the brown doll though the majority of the Black children still preferred the doll with the white skin color.

McAdoo (1985) studied racial attitudes among a group of northern and southern Black

children over time. Racial attitudes were assessed five ways: PRAM II, doll test, racial identification procedure, racial group awareness, and a separate racial content scoring of the self-portraits. The racial group awareness score was obtained when the children were asked, "What type of person do most people in America think is best?" They were given the choices of different groups: Black, Jewish, White Protestant, and White Catholic. The question was repeated until the child had ranked all of the groups. She found that, in both northern and southern children, significant shifts occurred over a 5-year period. Both groups of children at ages 9-10 showed a dramatic change of racial attitudes in the pro-black direction.

Freeman (1998) examined racial stereotyping among a group of second and fourth grade Black children attending an African-centered school. The racial stereotyping measure developed by Doyle, Beaudet, & Aboud (1988) was used to assess racially stereotyped beliefs. The measure contains the traits from the PRAM II . Children were asked to assign traits to African-Americans and European-Americans by pointing to one of the four cards labeled: "only black people", "only white people", "both black people and white people", or "neither black people nor white people". Children's responses were classified as one of three types: (1) stereotyped responses,"including positive traits assigned to "only white people" and negative traits assigned to "only black people", (2) counterstereotyped responses, including positive traits assigned to "only black people" and negative traits assigned to "only white people", and (3) nonstereotyped responses, including positive traits assigned to either "both black and white people" or "neither black nor white people". Older children made fewer stereotyped and counterstereotyped responses and more nonstereotyped traits than the younger children.

The findings show that Black children's attitudes to their own group changes in a positive

direction with age. Children's racial stereotyping appears to increase through the preschool years, peak in kindergarten or early elementary school, and decline through the middle elementary school years (Doyle, et al., 1988).

One basis for a decline in stereotyped beliefs during middle childhood is the development of multiple classification skills. Children between the ages of 2 and 7 classify objects largely by such concrete, observable properties as color or verbal labels as a basis for classification. They tend to focus on external attributes of people and to assume that those similar on one dimension are similar on other dimensions as well (Aboud & Skerry, 1984; McGuire & Padawer-Singer, 1976; Piaget, 1928). Young children have difficulty in understanding that the same person, object, or event can be classified along more than one dimension. Thus, they may have difficulty in processing or remembering the information that a particular person is simultaneously a member of some group and possesses some characteristics or traits not stereotypically linked to that group.

During the period between about 7 and 11, children develop the ability to classify objects on multiple criteria simultaneously. Their descriptions of themselves and others also shift from observable physical and behavioral characteristics to more internal psychological attributes (Shantz, 1983). As they master multiple classifications, they can conceive members of a different racial group as being similar to themselves on features other than race. Mastering multiple classification allows them to make finer differentiations among people and to understand the complex notion that people can be both "the same" and "different"; those who look different need not act differently or be evaluated differently (Damon & Hart, 1982; Doyle & Aboud, 1991 cited in Powlishta, Serbin, Doyle, & White, 1994). This advanced cognitive ability leads to greater flexibility of beliefs (e.g., a recognition that members of different categories may possess similar

traits), and a decline in negative racial attitudes (Aboud, 1988; Doyle et al., 1988; Powlishta, et al., 1994; Signorella, Bigler, & Liben, 1993).

Bigler and Liben (1993) examined the role of multiple classification skills and belief in racial stereotypes in 4- to 9- year old European American children. The task consisted of photographs of people who differed according to sex, race, age, and facial expressions. The children were asked to sort the cards into two groups by "putting the people who go together into the same pile", and the children were allowed to sort until they stopped producing additional sorts. The ability to classify people along multiple dimensions were associated with better memory for counterstereotyped responses (positive traits assigned to only Black people and negative traits assigned to only White people). The 8- and 9- year olds had less stereotyped responses and more counterstereotyped and nonstereotyped responses than the 4- to 7- year olds.

Similar results were found by Freeman (1998) who administered a multiple classification task and racial stereotypes belief instrument to second and fourth grade African American children. The classification task used was developed by Bigler and Liben (1993). The children were asked to sort the cards into two groups by "putting the people who go together into the same pile", and the children were allowed to sort until they stopped producing additional sorts. Children who demonstrated the ability to classify people along multiple dimensions endorsed more nonstereotyped (positive and negative traits assigned to both Black and White people) portrayals than children who did not demonstrate multiple classification skill. Fourth graders chose more nonstereotyped responses than the second graders.

Racial Attitudes in Relation to Self-Concept

One implication drawn from the early studies of racial attitudes was that they reflected

children's sense of self worth. It was taken for granted that Black children had low self-esteem when they indicated a preference for Whites over Blacks. In other words, the assumption was that when Blacks prefer another group over their own, they also devalue themselves. Considerable controversy arose over whether attitudes toward one's own group directly reflected the attitudes one held about oneself. Early studies testing this assumption indicated that Black children's self-esteem was high while attitudes toward their own racial group was either positive or negative. The way children feel about themselves seems not to be related to the way they feel about their own racial group (Rasheed, 1981; Rosenberg, 1979; Spencer, 1973 cited in McAdoo, 1985).

More recent research supports the independence of self-esteem and racial preferences. Brome (1989) examined the relationship between first, fourth, and eighth grade Black children's racial attitudes and their self-concept. The Rosenberg Self-Concept Scale was used to indicate either positive or negative self feelings and the Paired Hands Test (PHT) was used to measure racial attitudes. The PHT consists of 20 photographs showing two hands of different persons socially interacting. One version shows two black hands interacting and one version shows one black and one white hand interacting. Children were asked to select one of five statements that best fit their perception of the nature of the interaction. The acceptance of others in social situation by grade level was not found for self-concept. In fact, the mean scores by grade level for self-concept were essentially the same for first, fourth and eighth graders. For this population of children the acceptance of others in social situations was not significantly correlated with self-concept.

McAdoo (1985) studied the development of self-esteem and racial attitudes in northern and southern Black children over a 5-year period. Three procedures were used to collect self-

concept data: the Thomas Self-Concept Values Test, the Engle Self-Concept Procedures, and the self-portrait and story technique. The Thomas asks 14 bipolar questions that provide an assessment of how children view themselves and their perceptions of how they are viewed by important reference persons: mother, teachers, and peers. These questions are asked in relation to the children's own polaroid pictures. The questions ask how the children rate themselves on the dimensions of appearance, size, ability, sociability, happiness, and strength.

The Engle Self-Concept procedure was the second instrument used to measure self-esteem. Children were shown an illustration of two stick figures standing at both ends of a stepladder with five steps. One figure was identified as having positive characteristics (happy) and the other as being negative (sad). The children's self-evaluation statement was rated by their placement of a mark for themselves on one of the rungs of the ladder. Seven different selections were made (appearance, strength, likability, ability, happiness, bravery, and following rules).

Color preference and self image were measured by the self-portrait and story technique. Children were asked to select a piece of paper when shown eight sheets of paper (two each of black, brown, tan, and white) in identical random order. Then they were given a new box of crayons and asked to draw themselves. They were then asked in a nondirective manner to tell a story about the drawing.

Changes over the years in both self-concepts and racial attitudes were significant for the children. Self-concept scores increased significantly and racial attitudes dramatically changed in the pro-Black-oriented direction. Children developed high self-esteem around the age of 5 or 6 and positive attitudes toward their own racial group which occurred later in development. Furthermore, children's feelings of self-worth were not related to their evaluation of their own

ethnic group.

Similar results were found by Freeman (1993) who examined the relationship between first and second grade Black children's racial attitudes and self-perception. A modified version of the PRAM II was used to measure racial attitudes. The Pictorial Scale of Perceived Competence and Social Acceptance measure developed by Harter (1983) was used to measure self-perception. The Perceived Competence and Social Acceptance scale contains four separate subscales: cognitive competence, physical competence, peer acceptance, and maternal acceptance. Children's self-concept was not related to their attitudes toward their group.

These results support previous findings that suggest that children's self-concepts are not related to how they feel about their group. In addition, the findings indicate that Black children develop high self-esteem at an earlier age than they develop positive attitudes toward their racial group.

Racial Attitudes in Relation to Peer Preference and Social Interaction

Children's affective reactions to others typically reflect a global preference for people who are like them. Thus, when making affective choices among peers, children often show evidence of own-race bias. White children often prefer to interact with their own racial group, but the opposite results are found for Black children. Young Black children prefer to interact with White children rather than with their own racial group. As Black children get older, however, they equally prefer to interact with Black and White children. Goodman (1952) found that racial awareness was not only present at age 4, but children at this age were already expressing strongly confirmed race-related values. Eighty-four percent of the Black children reported being friendly toward White children while only 56% were friendly toward Black children. Of the White children

93% were friendly toward their own race and 56% were friendly toward Black children.

Black children's perceptions of social interactions among Blacks and among black/white pairs were the subject of an investigation including first, fourth, and eighth graders who attended a predominantly Black private school and a predominantly white public suburban school (Brome, 1989). The Paired Hands Test (PHT) was given to measure children's acceptance of others in social situations. First graders gave less positive responses toward the black pairs than did the older children, but no significant differences were found between grade levels on responses to the black/white pairs. First graders gave more positive responses to the interracial hands than they gave to the black hands, whereas the fourth and eighth graders responded similarly to both sets of hands.

Children's racial attitudes have also been measured by their willingness to accept and associate with children of different races. Sesame Street Research (1990) investigated how Black and White children would react to peer pressure to exclude a child because of skin color. White and Black children were shown two scenario cards depicting peer pressure to exclude a child because of skin color. Scenario 1 contained peer pressure to exclude a White child and Scenario 2 depicted pressure to exclude a Black child. Of the Black children 63% said the child in Scenario 1 would play with the White child but only 50% said the child in Scenario 2 would play with the Black child. The majority of White children (77%) thought the children in both stories would play with the excluded child. When asked if they would play with the child in Scenarios 1 and 2; 83% of Black children and 93% of White children said that they would play with the White child, and 83% of Black children and 90% of White children said that they would play with the Black child.

The majority of research findings suggest that young Black and White children show a

higher preference for interacting with Whites. The choices by Black children to interact more with their own race become more common with age.

Summary

The research consistently shows that racial attitudes are acquired by both Black and White children by 4 years of age, and often change in a positive direction during the following 8 years. Preschool children of both races tend to exhibit a preference for white. The tendency for children to evaluate the color white positively and the color black negatively is not restricted to the United States. Children in other countries, including France, Italy, Israel, and Trinidad exhibit a preference for the white color or figure in response to positive adjectives and the black color or figure in response to negative adjectives. Considerable controversy arise over whether attitudes toward one's racial group directly reflected the attitudes one held about oneself. Studies have shown that there is no relationship between the way Black children feel about themselves and the way they feel about their racial group. Black and White children also exhibit a preference to interact with Whites. As Black children get older their racial attitudes change in the pro-black direction and they selected both Blacks and Whites equally for interaction. One explanation for the apparent change in attitudes with age for Black children is that older children are more mature cognitively and have better ability to synthesize their social experiences. Perhaps as children grow older they are better able to hear, understand, and think about messages given to them and arrive at their own conclusions. Interestingly, Black boys were more likely to exhibit a preference for the white doll than Black girls.

Salience of Race

Young children initially acquire social stereotypes through the mechanism of

categorization. As early as age 2, children begin to categorize on the basis of such social dimensions as gender, race, and age. The period from ages 2 to 7 is the time during which children not only make self differentiations but also become increasingly aware of race and sex differences (Powell, 1982). They begin to learn social attitudes toward gender and ethnic groups, including their own. They learn to distinguish individual and group differences based on obvious physical characteristics such as skin color and facial features. By the association of physical characteristics, activities and traits with these category systems, racial stereotypes may be acquired.

Because children's responses to racial differences occur in a context of responding to other social categories that involve a complex set of cognitive, affective, and behavioral components, knowledge of how these various components function independently and in relationship with each other is important. From a developmental perspective, both race and sex are likely to be salient in preschoolers' cognitive responses. Because they are preoperational thinkers children at this age generally use concrete and observable cues when categorizing and identifying themselves and others (Harter, 1983; Piaget, 1963). In addition, preschoolers are beginning to learn about social classifications in a society that emphasizes differences in both race and sex (Katz, 1983).

Recent research therefore, has been concerned with the relative salience of various social dimensions at different ages. It has also addressed the relations of stereotypes to cognitive developmental changes and the sequence in which children acquire the social stereotypes relevant to particular dimensions.

Salience in Relation to Other Social Categories

Many common social categories are based on easily perceived physical features such as

age, race, and sex. Some studies suggest that when children are given alternatives to race as dimensions on which to classify people they will not use skin color as an evaluative criterion. Freeman (1998) studied the salience of race when more than one evaluative criterion is available. The multiple classification task developed by Bigler and Liben (1993) was used to measure the salience of race as a social category. The stimuli consisted of a set of 16 cards with photographs of people who differ according to sex, race, age, facial expression, and appearance. The children were asked to sort a selection of pictures into two groups in whatever way they wished. After sorting the cards, children were asked to explain their sort. The most common basis for classification in the initial sort among children was appearance. Second graders' most common basis for classification in the initial sort was race. The most common basis for the classification in the first sort for fourth graders was appearance. Only 25% (31% of second graders and 17% of fourth graders) sorted by race on their initial classification.

Several studies have shown that when the alternative criterion is sex, race is used less frequently to categorize or describe others. Dent (1978) examined the salience of race when more than one evaluative criterion was available. Children from Scotland ages 5 to 6 were given either the standard Color Meaning Test (CMT) or the modified version of the CMT. In the standard CMT, children are confronted with pairs of animals differing only in color, making color the only possible basis for an evaluative choice. In the modified version they were presented with pairs of animals differing in color and animal type. When the only basis for discrimination among animals was color, children showed a high degree of white-positive and black-negative bias. When different types of animals were presented in pairs, children ceased to use color as the evaluative criterion. It should be noted that this study did not test race but animals differing in color. Given

that other variables, when available, can override color, what sort of variables are likely to offset color differences and in which situations do color differences assume relative importance?

Canadian English-speaking children attending grades kindergarten through six were studied for their use of three social dimensions: gender, language/ethnicity, and body type as bases of categorization (Doyle, Serbin, White, Rhodes, Gulko, & Felham, 1987). Children were asked to categorize pictures of children or adults. They could use a relevant social dimension (either gender, body type, or ethno-linguistic group), or an alternative dimension, such as activity, body posture or facial expression, or none. Gender and body type were the most frequently used categories for all but the sixth graders. Knowledge of gender stereotypes increased rapidly from grades kindergarten to first, during which time categorization by gender was most frequent. In contrast, categorization by ethno-linguistic group remained fairly constant between grades kindergarten through sixth. These results may not apply, however, to ethnic groups with more obvious physical differences (e.g., skin color) than English vs. French-speaking Canadians.

Triviz (1987) designed a study to investigate the processes involved in prioritizing the social categories of gender and ethnicity in Anglo-American and Mexican-American first graders' self-concepts. Photographs of Anglo- and Mexican-American children were used to measure how salient gender and ethnicity were in their definitions of themselves and others, and to explore how individuals' perceptions of these two social categories might lead to their choices of friends. Gender was found to be more salient than ethnicity. Children perceived themselves as more similar to others of their sex than to children of their ethnicity. They also chose same-sex peers in sociometric tasks and on the playground more often than they chose same-ethnicity peers.

Bennett, Dewbery, and Yeeles (1991) examined the salience of ethnicity in 8- and 11-year-

old British children's social categorizations and preference judgments. Children were afforded the possibility of responding to photographs of target persons on the basis of either individual characteristics or group characteristics. They were asked to sort a selection of pictures into groups in whatever way they wished. These photographs depicted an equal number of (a) boys and girls, (b) White and Black children (within the Black group, Asian v. West Indian children), and (c) children expressing either positive or negative affect. Having sorted the photographs, the children were asked to indicate whether there were any that they liked or disliked, and to explain their choices. Ethnicity was seldom used as a basis for categorizing persons, nor was it widely implicated in judgments of preference. Since this study was conducted in an area virtually devoid of ethnic minority groups, a replication was undertaken in an area containing a substantial ethnic minority population. Ethnicity appeared to be a fairly salient basis for categorization among the 8-year-old children, but the results were otherwise similar to those of the first study.

Several experiments with United States preschool children were designed to test the salience of sex, race, and age. A fourth dimension, the presence or absence of glasses, was included as a probable nonsalient dimension (McGraw, Durm, & Durnam, 1989).

In experiments 1 and 2, Black and White children were asked to discriminate between pairs of head-and-shoulder photographs of adults. The cards were presented in a notebook with one photograph pair per page with a star placed beside one of the photographs. For experiment 1, the photographs were arranged so that one photograph in each pair was contrasted with the other on all the variables: sex, age, race, and glasses. For example, if one photograph was an old White man with glasses, the other was a young Black woman without glasses. In experiment 2, the pictures were constructed to eliminate sex as an basis for discrimination. Only same-sex picture

pairs were used. For example, a picture of a young White man wearing glasses was contrasted with a picture of an old Black man without glasses. After children identified which of the two photographs was marked by the star, they were asked to tell about the photograph marked by the star. In experiment one, the children most often used the person's sex as an identifier. In experiment 2, in which sex was eliminated as a basis for discrimination, children most often used racial descriptors. These studies suggest that sex, not race is the most salient variable used by children in categorizing and grouping people.

Even though some studies have shown that sex, not race, is the most salient variable in categorizing and describing people, other studies have shown that race was equally or more salient than sex in young children's categorization of themselves and others.

The relative salience of race and sex in children's categories and peer preferences were measured for preschool children who lived in a virtually all-white community located in northern New England (Ramsey, 1991).

The cognitive measures included salience of race in categorization of other people and categorization of self. Categorization of others was measured by presenting photographs of unfamiliar Asian-American, African-American, and European-American children. In each array, the pictures varied by race and sex. For each presentation, children were instructed to put the two pictures together that "go together"; then they were asked to explain their choices. In categorization of self, children were shown photographs of targets who were same-race and different-race and asked to select peers who were (a) the same as themselves and (b) different from themselves, and to explain their choices. Salience of race in responses to open-ended questions included showing children photographs of three same-sex peers who represented each

racial group. The children saw one picture at a time and were asked to describe each photograph. Race was more salient than sex when children categorized other people, but both traits were equally salient when they classified themselves.

The affective measure included preferences for same- and different-race classmates. Children were shown the same set of photographs used in the self-categorization task, and asked to choose the targets that they would like to have as friends and to select ones that they did not want to have as friends. Evaluative comments made in response to open-ended questions about same- and different-race peers were coded for affective content (favorable, neutral, or unfavorable).

In their peer preferences, sex was the stronger factor in their positive choices, but race was more salient in their negative ones. Children preferred members of groups whom they saw as similar to themselves. Although the children accurately distinguished between Asian-American and African-American targets in the categorization-of-others task, they did not respond differently to the two groups. Race was equally salient in their responses to both groups. Contrary to previous findings (McGraw et al., 1989; Triviz, 1987) race, not sex, was used a higher percentage of the time in the grouping-of-others task.

In the second study, similar measures of cognitive and affective responses were collected. In addition, observed behavioral responses to racial differences were analyzed to assess the salience of race in each process and the extent to which racial responses are related across dimensions (Ramsey & Myers, 1990). The preschool and kindergarten children (40% Black, 60% White) were in racially integrated classrooms and lived in a racially mixed, working class urban neighborhood in the northeastern United States.

Categorization of others was measured by presenting photographs of classmates and unfamiliar African-American and European-American children in groups of three. In each array, the pictures varied on two of three attributes: race, gender, and familiarity. Two arrays provided a choice between race and sex; two between familiarity and gender; and two between familiarity and race. For each presentation, children were instructed to put the two pictures together that "go together"; then they were asked to explain their choices. In categorization of self, children were shown photographs of unfamiliar children and asked to select targets who were (a) the same as themselves and (b) different from themselves, and to explain their choices.

The affective measure included preferences for same- and cross race classmates. Children were shown pictures of all their classmates and asked to sort them by the people they liked (a) most and (b) least, then they were asked to explain their choices.

The procedures for measuring salience of race in categorizations of other people, categorization of self, and preference for same- and different-race peers were identical to Ramsey's (1991) measures. To identify more precisely the relative salience of race in children's playmate choices, the frequencies of children's same- and different-race and -sex interactions were observed. Contact patterns were recorded during free play over a 4-month period. Children's levels of social participation (cooperative, parallel, aggressive, onlooker, or solitary) with peers were recorded in spot observations.

Children's racial self-categorization and their explicit references to race were correlated with their affective and behavioral preferences. Black and White children showed similar levels of racial salience on the cognitive tasks but differed in their affective and behavioral patterns. White children showed stronger and more consistent same-race preferences than their Black peers.

Children who differentiated themselves by race more frequently rejected different-race classmates. Children who referred to race as an explicit reason for selecting a child as similar to themselves were more likely to like same-race peers, reject different-race peers, and use race as an explicit reason for liking same-race peers. White children showed a correlation between grouping others by race and liking same-race peers. Children who chose same-race friends were more often observed in same-race cooperative play. Children who used race as an explicit reason for not liking a classmate were more often seen in same-race parallel play. White children who did not like different-race peers were more likely to engage in aggression toward different-race peers than Black children.

The findings of the two previous studies have demonstrated that race and sex are salient dimensions in children's categorization of themselves and others, and that race was used more often than sex when categorizing others. In both studies, race was a factor when the children categorized people and chose friends, although its salience varied across categorization tasks and across dimensions. In the self-categorizations, same-race and same-sex peers were selected in equal proportions in the similarity tasks. However, in the other-people categorization task, children selected by race significantly more frequently than they did by sex.

These studies have conflicting findings about salience of race as other category. Why? Racial salience may be related to the diversity of the community and school. The McGraw et al. (1989) study was conducted in a racially homogeneous setting and 17% non-White children compared to Ramsey (1990) sample who attended a racially heterogeneous school and lived in a multiracial neighborhood.

Another explanation for conflicting findings is the demand of the task. Unlike the Ramsey

(1990, 1991) studies, majority of the United States studies examining the salience of race did not ask children to sort and explain their choices, but to only explain the picture marked. In addition, Ramsey (1990, 1991) asked the children to sort the pictures in categorization of other people and in categorization of self. Differences were found when children categorized themselves and other people. Race was more salient when children categorized other people than when they categorized themselves.

The relative salience of race vs sex may also be related to community attitudes and probably geographical region. It seems that race would be more salient for children who have parents or live in a community that strongly stresses race than for children who are not exposed to that environment. Unfortunately, the studies did not collect any information on parental or community attitudes which makes it difficult to draw this conclusion. These studies were also conducted either in the deep south or northeastern region of the United States, or in other countries.

In several other experiments, the speed with which children learned the discrimination task was used to measure the salience of race, glasses, and age (McGraw et al., 1989). The child's task in the racial concept-identification task was to choose the correct picture from pairs of pictures differing on sex, race, age, presence of glasses. One half of the children were reinforced for picking the Black person, and the other half for the White person. It was predicted that children for whom race was salient would learn more quickly than those for whom it was not.

In the second experiment, the photograph designated as correct on each trial showed either a person who wore glasses or a person who did not. Sex, age, race, and position of the photograph were irrelevant variables. Children who did and did not wear glasses participated. In

the third experiment, age was the concept dimension to be learned. Half of the children were given a concept-identification problem in which faces of preschool children were contrasted with those of young adults. The other half were given the task of discriminating faces of elderly adults from those of young adults.

The findings of all three studies demonstrated that the child's group membership was not related to learning, and by implication, to the salience of the dimension. Black children found race to be no more salient than did White children, and children who wore glasses were no more sensitive to their presence or absence than those who did not wear glasses. Furthermore, children were no more likely to make an age discrimination when the task was to discriminate children from adults than when it was to discriminate between adults of different ages. Overall, varying the extent to which children represented one or the other of the values of facial variables did not affect the salience of those variables when they were presented along with competing facial characteristics in a concept-identification task.

Children may not have compared the faces for their contrasts but instead viewed them individually with regard to what made them distinctive. Children learned the task more quickly when black was correct than when white was correct; similarly they learned to use the presence of glasses as a basis for categorization more quickly than the absence of glasses. From this perspective, the data suggests that maleness is as distinct as femaleness and youth as distinct as age, but that blackness is more distinct than whiteness and the presence of glasses more distinct than their absence. In social perception, dimensions and their values are not equally salient and are not equally likely to be attended to when information is encoded.

Social schemas have been employed in the examination of children's salience of social

categories.

Schema Theory

Social schemas are cognitive structures that represent knowledge about a concept or type of human characteristic, including its attributes and the relations among the attributes. Schemas influence the encoding of new information, memory for old information, and inferences when information is missing (Fiske & Taylor, 1991).

Before people can apply their schemas, they have to classify the person or situation as fitting a familiar category. Categorization processes describe how people classify and identify individual instances as members of larger familiar groupings. Once people recognize someone as filling a role on the basis of particular attributes then they can apply their knowledge about the role to guide the subsequent interaction (Fiske & Taylor, 1991).

Social schemas influence perception, memory, and inference. The most well-documented effects occur for memory. People tend to remember schema-relevant information and to forget information that is irrelevant or inconsistent with a schema. When schema-inconsistent material is recalled, children tend to distort it to conform to their attitudinal schemata.

Individual differences in schemas have been investigated primarily for gender schemas. Bem (1981) proposed that gender is more salient or important to some individuals than to others. Those for whom gender is salient interpret the world using gender based schemata, while others use different social categories. According to gender schema theory the phenomenon of sex typing derives, in part, from gender-based schematic processing, from a generalized readiness to process information on the basis of the sex-linked associations that constitute the gender schema. Once children have acquired gender schemas, they interpret events and behavior in their world

according to those schemas and they recall other people's behavior in a schema framework (Bem, 1981; Liben & Signorella, 1980; Martin & Halverson, 1981).

Schema frameworks are only beginning to be employed in the examination of children's race stereotyping. According to the race schema theory, the phenomenon of race stereotyping derives, in part, from race-based schematic processing, from a generalized readiness to process information on the basis of race associations. Children with a race schema categorize and make associations about individuals based on their racial/ethnic group. Once children have acquired race schemata, they interpret events in their world according to these developed schemas. They attend selectively, recall, and infer attributes and behavior that are schema-consistent while ignoring schema-inconsistent information.

Salience as a Predictor of Memory, Attitude, and Peer Preference

The effects of salience of social categories have been investigated in the framework of social schema theory. Schema-based models have the potential to be relevant to social categories such as gender and race to explain individual differences in sex stereotyping and race stereotyping.

Bigler and Liben (1993) examined the role of cognitive skill and racial stereotyping in children's processing of race-related information. Subjects were European American children aged 4 to 9 years, and they were predominantly middle class. Children were asked to recall stories that were either consistent with or inconsistent with cultural racial stereotypes. In six trait stories, a European American main character encountered both a European American and an African American child in the course of some daily activity. In three of the stories a negative trait was attributed to the African American (stereotypic story) and in three of the stories a negative trait was attributed to the European American child (counterstereotypic story). In six social

relationship stories, main characters interacted with neighbors, friends, or married couples. Again, each relationship was presented twice, one each in stereotypic (an intraracial relationship) and once each in countersterotypic (an interracial relationship) form.

Individual differences in racial stereotypes were measured on the traits from the Preschool Racial Attitude Measure II. The children were asked to assign traits ("Who can be ___?") to "only black people", to "only white people", or to "both black and white people". Children's responses were classified as one of three types: (1) stereotyped responses: positive traits assigned to "only white people" and negative traits assigned to "only black people", (2) counterstereotyped responses: positive traits assigned to "only Black people" and negative traits assigned to "only White people", and (3) nonstereotyped responses: traits assigned to "both White and Black people".

Overall, children recalled fewer stories that were inconsistent with cultural racial stereotypes than stories that were consistent with cultural stereotypes. In addition, individual differences in children's evaluative beliefs affected their memories for racial stereotype information. Children with high levels of pro-white and anti-black beliefs had significantly poorer recall of stereotype- inconsistent than -consistent characteristics. Children with low levels of racially stereotyped beliefs showed better memory for inconsistent characteristics than children with high levels. The 8 and 9 year olds had less stereotyped responses and more counterstereotyped and nonstereotyped responses than the 4 to 7 year olds.

Levy (in press) investigated children's recognition memory for race stereotyped portrayals, race schematicity (a measure of salience), racial-stereotyped beliefs, and race-based peer preferences. Participants were African American and European children between 3 and 6 years of

age in integrated preschools serving families from lower to middle socioeconomic status.

In the memory task children were presented with and later asked to remember 12 line drawings. Each depiction included two persons of the same-sex but differing races engaging in particular roles and activities. Seven drawings illustrated scenarios which were consistent with roles stereotypically associated with Black and White Americans. The remaining five drawings depicted episodes inconsistent with race stereotyping.

The Preschool Racial Attitude Measure II was used to measure children's racially stereotyped beliefs about Black and White Americans. The Race Schematicity Measure was used to assess the salience of the race dimension to children and children's race-based peer preferences. This measure comprised line drawings of Black and White boys and girls. Pairs of pictures differed on either race or sex. Children were asked to indicate which child in each pair they would prefer to play with. The latency of responding was the measure of salience. The more quickly the child responded, the more salient was presumed to be the dimension on which the pair of pictures differed.

Children high in negative same-race beliefs recognized more stereotype-consistent and stereotype-inconsistent portrayals than children low in negative same-race beliefs. Children for whom race was highly salient distorted significantly more race stereotype-inconsistent drawings into consistent ones, transformed significantly fewer stereotype-consistent portrayals into stereotype-inconsistent ones, and preferred more same- than other-race peers than low race schematic children.

Children differing in racial stereotyped beliefs also demonstrated significantly different patterns of race-based peer preferences. Children high in positive same-race stereotyped beliefs

had significantly greater same-race peer preferences than children low in positive same-race beliefs. Children high in positive other-race beliefs showed greater other-race peer preferences than children who were low in other-race positive beliefs.

In a similar study, Levy and Katz (1993) applied a schema-based social information processing model to Black and White preschoolers between 3 and 6 years of age. The procedure was identical to Levy (in press). Younger children, White children, and high race schematic children demonstrated significantly greater same-race peer preferences than older children, Black children, and low race schematic children. Also, Black children showed significantly better memories than White children for racial stereotype-consistent depictions. High race schematic and Black children exhibited significantly more memory transformations of racial stereotype-inconsistent portrayals into consistent ones than did their low schematic and White counterparts. Low race schematic and Black children exhibited significantly more memory transformations of racial stereotype-consistent portrayals into inconsistent ones than did their high schematic and White counterparts.

Zimmerman and Levy (2000) examined the social cognitive predictors of prosocial behavior toward White and Black American children among White preschoolers. Children were administered a prosocial behavior measure, the Evaluative Attribution Task (EAT) to measure positive racial beliefs, and the race schematicity measure to assess the use of race-relevant differences in skin tone and hairstyle. White preschoolers race schematicity was predictive of their tendencies to act prosocially toward Black children. Low race schematic White preschoolers indicated that they would act prosocially toward Black children compared to high race schematic White preschoolers.

Similar results were found in which high race schematic children demonstrated greater same-race peer preferences than low race schematic children (Levy, Zimmerman, & Aguilar, 1997; Zimmerman and Levy, 1997).

The salience of social categories have been studied in the framework of the social schema theory. The findings support the prediction from schema theory that children have poorer memory for stories that are inconsistent with cultural racial stereotypes than stories that are consistent with cultural stereotypes. Individual differences in stereotyped beliefs and salience of race show a more pronounced tendency to prefer same-race peers and to distort schema-inconsistent information than their counterparts.

Distinctiveness Theory of Selective Perception

Race is sometimes a salient dimension guiding perception, memory, attitude, and behavior, but it is sometimes overshadowed by other social categories. Under what conditions are individuals perceived in ethnic terms? When does the ethnic role become salient? This question contains two distinct, but related problems: (1) what triggers or heightens self-awareness of one's ethnic identity; and (2) under what circumstances are others perceived predominantly in terms of their ethnic characteristics?

One general explanation of the arousal of both one's own and another's ethnic affiliation was derived from McGuire and Padawer-Singer's (1976) distinctiveness theory of selective perception. Distinctiveness theory predicts that people notice any aspect (dimension) of themselves or of another to the extent that the characteristic on that dimension is peculiar in that social milieu. For example, "because the majority of our associates are right-handed, it is more likely for sinister people to notice their left-handedness than for dexterous people to think of

themselves as right-handed. Again, given that a person is a Black woman, she is more likely to be aware of her womanhood when she is associating with Black men and of her blackness when she is associating with White women" (p.744). How likely people are to think of themselves in terms of a given personal characteristic is predicted from the distinctiveness postulate that implies that what is salient in a person's spontaneous self-concept is the person's peculiarities, the ways in which one differs from the other people in one's customary social environment. The finding that Black was more salient than white and wearing glasses was more salient than being without glasses is consistent with this hypothesis.

McGuire, McGuire, Child, and Fujoka (1978) used the distinctiveness postulate to predict the salience of ethnicity in children's spontaneous self-concepts. Children in four grade levels: first, third, seventh, and eleventh, were classified as being either White English-speaking, Black, Hispanic, or other.

Salience of ethnicity was measured by recording each child's response to the question, "Tell us about yourself" and the question, "Tell us what you are not". The spontaneous salience of ethnicity was scored when they described themselves by use of such terms as Black, White, Caucasian, Hispanic, Puerto Rican, and so forth or referred to their ethnicity in general terms. Ethnic consciousness was more salient in each minority than in the White, English-speaking group. The test of this hypothesis was, however, limited by the fact that the schools were predominantly white with very small groups of Blacks and Hispanics. The greater salience of race could have been due to social attitudes and racial stereotypes about minority groups.

Bochner and Ohsako (1977) tested the prediction from distinctiveness theory that in racially heterogeneous and integrated societies people will regard each other in ethnic terms, but

in racially homogeneous societies people will not be perceived from an ethnic perspective. The subjects were Japanese, Australian Caucasian, and Japanese-Hawaiian undergraduates, the former two groups belonging to racially homogeneous societies and the latter group belonging to a racially heterogeneous society. The undergraduates were exposed to slides of Japanese and Caucasian couples and asked to list three ways in which the persons were similar. As predicted by the theory, the Japanese described the Caucasian but not the Japanese couple in ethnic terms, the Australians described the Japanese but not the Caucasian couple in ethnic terms, and the Hawaiian-Japanese described both the Japanese and the Caucasian couple in ethnic terms.

Similar results were found by Dutton, Singer, and Devlin (1998) who examined racial identity of Black and White children attending either an integrated school, predominately White school, or predominately Black school. The children attending the integrated schools mentioned race and ethnicity more often than the children in the nonintegrated schools. Children from both the integrated school and the predominately White school chose opposite-race friends more often than the Black children from the nonintegrated school.

Distinctiveness theory has important social policy implications for integration. If one is more conscious of ethnicity as one's social environment becomes more heterogeneous, then intermixing heightens rather than erases consciousness of ethnicity and feelings of difference between the integrated groups. The theory predicts that, as schools integrate, children become more conscious of their ethnicity and more likely to define themselves in terms of it than in ethnically segregated schools.

Distinctiveness theory has been applied to explain the conditions and social situations that heighten awareness of one's racial identity. The theory suggests that race or any other social

category is salient to the extent that the characteristic on that dimension is peculiar in that social milieu.

There are individual differences in salience, but it is also subject to the effects of the social environment and culture.

Social Influences on Development and Individual Differences

The research literature establishes that children acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and preferences that predominate in their society. There are also stable individual differences among children. How do these differences come about? What is the role of socializing agents--family, media, schools and social cultural milieu--in this acquisition?

Family

One of the most important agents of attitude transmission is assumed to be the family. Children probably accept the parents' norms, values, and behavior patterns as their own through such processes as identification. Young children tend to internalize and model the values of their parents. The family is considered to most important in the early development of the child's self-concept, racial identity, and personal identity (Demo & Huges, 1990; Spencer, Dobbs, & Swanson, 1988). Racial attitudes may also be transmitted directly or implicitly by parents. For example, Gopaul-McNicol (1987) found that 70% of the Black parents she surveyed did not buy black dolls for their children, suggesting that parents may be implicitly guiding their children's experience. When Black parents buy only white dolls for their children, they may not have explicitly stated "we prefer white dolls", but the implication is that white dolls are better to play with. Without conscious or intentional value-statements the attitudes of parents and their behavior become models for the child.

Attitudes may be implied by subtle behavioral cues, and some theories propose that it is in this fashion rather than by direct instruction that many attitudes are learned. Erikson (1964) suggests that "minute displays of emotion such as affection, pride, anger, guilt, anxiety....(rather than the words used, the meanings intended, or the philosophy implied), transmit to the child the outlines of what really counts in this world." (p.30)

Despite the seemingly obvious importance of the family, relatively little research is available. Branch and Newcombe (1986) conducted a longitudinal and cross-sectional study on the development of racial attitudes among Black children as a function of parental attitudes. Black preschoolers were studied initially at ages 4 and 5 then were followed up after 2 1/2 years. One-parent and two-parent families participated in the study. All families were similar on activism status, occupation of head of the household, socioeconomic status, and family composition.

Children were administered a multiple-choice form of the doll test, the traditional doll test, and the Preschool Racial Attitudes Measure. Each child was also asked several questions, including: (1) Are you Black? How do you know that? (2)Do you like (how do you feel about) most Black people? Why? (3) Do Black people and white people get along well? Why? (4) Do you like most White people? Why? How do you know that? (5) Is your mommy (daddy) Black? How do you know that? (6) If you could change and become White (Black), would you want to do that? Why? Children were classified in one of three groups on the basis of their awareness of racial matters: none, a minimal level of awareness, or a high level. Parents were given measures of ethnocentrism, and parental attitudes about race and child-rearing. Interviews were also conducted with parents in order to give them an opportunity to explain their attitudes about child-rearing, especially about teaching their children about racial matters. Questions included: (1) Do

you teach your children about racial matters? Why or why not (2) What do you teach them? How? (3) How do you react when your child expresses a racial attitude very different from your own? (4) Do you think children should be taught about race and prejudice in school? Why or why not? (5) Is your attitude about teaching children about race very different from that of your parents? How did you come to develop your present attitude? Parental interviews were classified as: A) don't teach anything about race, B) teach an egalitarian position, or C) teach in a pro-black/anti-white direction.

Parents' racial attitudes and attitudes about teaching their children about race varied with the sex of the child, and one- versus two-parent family type. Two-parent families of girls had higher black ethnocentrism scores than one-parent families. In particular, two-parent families of 6- and 7-year-old girls had more pro-black attitudes than one-parent families. Girls from two-parent families showed more black preference than girls from one-parent families. By contrast, parents of males had relatively high ethnocentric and parental attitude scores, whether in one- or two-parent families. Boys of one-parent families showed a lower preference for white than boys of two-parent families.

Parent and child attitudes as measured by the interviews for both younger and older children were related. Children at both ages who had a high level awareness, knowledge, and preference in racial matters were more likely to have parents who teach children about race in a pro-black fashion than were children who had no or minimal awareness and knowledge of race.

Parental attitudes may not be fixed but may be affected by attributes of the child being reared. Specifically, single parents of girls were less ethnocentric and expressed a less strong pro-black teaching position than parents of girls in two-parent families. Parents of boys may have

believed that Black males are especially vulnerable and in need of special socialization to survive in American society.

Media

The mass media are another potentially potent means of attitude transmission. Black American characters are more likely to be presented in a highly stereotyped manner than are White American characters in terms of occupational level, social role assignments, and behavioral characteristics (Graves, 1993; Williams & Condry, 1989). For example, Black Americans make up only 2% of the scientists on television (Gerbner, Gross, & Signorielli, 1985). Generally, Black Americans are likely to be portrayed as nurses, blue-collar workers, and law enforcement officers (Graves, 1993; Williams & Condry, 1989). Furthermore, Blacks are more likely than whites to be presented as both victims and suspects or perpetrators of violence (Lichter & Lichter, 1988; Williams & Condry, 1989). Television also presents Black American characters as exhibiting specific behaviors or having particular personality characteristics; for example, most of the Black families are poor and unsuccessful; characters often insult each other. Black Americans are concentrated in particular types of programs, primarily situation comedies where there is almost no interaction with White characters (Graves, 1993).

Television could be a source of information on how to interact successfully in cross-ethnic situations. However, because Black American characters in prime time are frequently segregated in all-minority situation comedies or are presented in association with violent acts, there is limited opportunity for meaningful modeling of interracial interactions or for explicit discussions of race relations (Graves, 1993; Lemon, 1977).

Television portrayals of Blacks could teach or reinforce stereotypic beliefs and prejudicial

attitudes, regardless of whether people utilize program content as a source of entertainment or information. These portrayals could also have an impact on children's views about themselves, their race, and other racial groups. Graves (1975) conducted a study on the positive and negative portrayals of Black cartoon characters on the influence of Black and White children's racial attitudes. White children who saw positive portrayals had more positive attitudes toward Blacks after viewing the cartoons. On the other hand, Whites who saw negative portrayals had more negative attitudes toward Blacks. Black children, regardless of whether the portrayal was positive or negative, showed increases in positive racial attitudes. In a similar study, Freeman (1993) examined the effects of positive portrayals of Black television characters on Black children's racial attitudes and self-perception. Boys who watched positive portrayals of Black television characters showed an increase in positive racial attitudes and a decrease in negative attitudes toward Blacks. In addition, children exposed to prosocial Black television characters exhibited higher levels of self-perception than those who were not exposed.

Fujioka (1999) examined the effects of television portrayals and stereotypes about African-Americans can have on individuals when direct contact is lacking. Japanese international and White students' positive and negative evaluations about African Americans were affected by the television portrayals of African Americans.

School

Although many children continue to live in racially homogeneous neighborhoods, a number of them attend integrated schools. When school integration was mandated, people generally assumed that contact with another racial group would reduce prejudice because familiarity reduces threat and enhances knowledge of what the two have in common (Hewstone &

Brown, 1986). Evidence for the contact hypothesis, as this is called, has been mixed. Most studies do find a difference in prejudice between segregated and integrated schools in that there is less prejudice toward Blacks in integrated schools. However, Black children attending integrated schools appear to show less white preference and more black preference than Blacks attending predominantly Black schools (Brome, 1989; Powell-Hopson & Hopson, 1992).

By contrast, Clark and Clark (1963) found that southern Black children in segregated schools were less pronounced in choosing the white doll than northern children in integrated schools in their preference for the white doll. These differences could be a function of region and local attitudes as well as school integration or segregation.

The contact hypothesis was tested in a study of the effects of segregated and integrated schools on Black and White preschoolers' racial preferences (Powell-Hopson & Hopson, 1992). The children were presented with dolls that were exactly alike except for skin color and hair texture and instructed to choose a doll to play with in groups of five. They were then individually asked the preference questions: "Give me the doll that.... (1) you want to be, (2) you like to play with, (3) is a nice doll, (4) looks bad, (5) is a nice color, (6) you would take home if you could?"

In a pretest, the children in the segregated classrooms favored the white doll more than did the children in integrated classrooms. Fifty percent of the children in integrated classrooms and 31% of the children in the segregated classrooms chose the black doll as the doll that they wanted to play with and the doll that "is a nice doll."

Children in both classrooms then received an intervention including learning principles of modeling, reinforcement, and color meaning word associations. In the intervention the children who chose a black doll were reinforced (verbally praised) and allowed to sit up front with the

researchers. The researchers chose black dolls themselves and modeled pro-black responses to the preference questions. In a story read to the children a Black male child and a Black female child were portrayed as the smartest and best in their class. The researchers also asked the children to hold up the black dolls and repeat the positive adjectives such as "pretty, nice, handsome, clean, smart, good," and "we like these dolls the best." The dolls were never referred to as black or white.

In the posttest, there were increases in the percentage of children choosing the black doll in both settings, but children in integrated classrooms chose it more frequently than those in segregated classrooms. Overall, the intervention was effective, and both Black and White children in integrated classrooms were more positive about the black doll than the children in segregated classrooms.

Social-Cultural Milieu

Children's attitudes are influenced by the social situation that surrounds them, and these attitudes in turn influence their perception of their environment. Sorce (1979) examined the effects of segregated and integrated schools and neighborhoods on the development of racial awareness for Black and White children. A discrimination task consisting of sketches of a male face displaying a variety of racial characteristics and a nonracial feature was administered. Children were asked to look at both pictures and state whether they were the same or different. There were no significant differences between the segregated and integrated groups on children's performance on the discrimination task. Children did not demonstrate high levels of awareness since only 45% of the segregated group's and 23% of the integrated group's responses were racial. White children in a segregated environment produced significantly more racial categories

than children from the integrated environment. White children from the segregated environment discriminated and categorized pictures based on race more than either White or Black children from an integrated environment. One limitation to this study was that there were no Black children in a segregated environment. The findings, however, seem to suggest that the type of neighborhood or school influences the development of racial awareness.

Black youths in grades 3-12 living in predominantly White suburban communities in the Pacific Northwest were tested for self-concept, racial attitudes, and attitudes toward their neighborhood and their school (Banks, 1984). Although there were no comparison groups, the findings describe the patterns for Black youth growing up as a minority in integrated neighborhoods and schools. Children had generally positive racial attitudes toward themselves, their communities, and their schools. They had positive attitudes toward both Blacks and Whites, although they were slightly more positive toward Blacks than toward Whites.

Several findings in this study suggest that the experiences of Black females in predominantly White suburban communities may be slightly more difficult than those of Black males. Girls not only liked their neighborhoods less than boys but had slightly more negative attitudes toward Blacks. Life in white suburban communities may become more difficult as Black children grow older. The older children had significantly more positive attitudes toward their schools and Whites, but less positive attitudes toward Blacks and their neighborhoods.

Summary

Racial attitudes are transmitted by a variety of mechanisms. It appears that the first five years of life are important though not conclusive for the development of racial attitudes. A directional set may be given to the child during the preschool years by the reaction of parents in

terms of direct instruction, indirect instruction, or behavioral cues; the comments of peers; experiences in integrated or segregated settings, and exposure to stereotypes in mass media and literature.

In the elementary and adolescent years, family influences probably continue to be important, but few studies exist. Experience with segregated or integrated schools and neighborhoods can also be important. There is some evidence that integrated settings produce contact that reduces stereotyping and negative attitudes (but other research questions that). As noted earlier, however, multiracial settings may also make racial differences more salient, with the possibility of negative attitudes resulting.

Interventions that stress positive qualities of Blacks can lead to increased positive attitudes. The processes of selective perception, reinforcement, and cognitive closure help give these attitudes their final form as children grow older.

Conclusion

"She's smart because she's white." "He's lazy because he's black." Racial attitudes like these are far from uncommon in American society. The only factor that distinguishes the above statements is that they were said by preschool-age Black and White children. The general public might be surprised to find that expressions of this type come from such young children, but numerous studies do in fact suggest that racial attitudes begin developing during the preschool years.

Krech, Crutchfield, and Ballachey (1962) proposed a definition of attitudes which stresses the interrelationship of several important components. They describe attitudes as systems which include beliefs about objects, feelings towards them, and dispositions to respond to them. Racial

prejudice is a particular type of attitude that may be directed toward a racial or ethnic group as a whole or toward an individual because they are a member of that group.

For children, the process of social comparison emerges in preschool years, as they begin to describe themselves in reference to other individuals. They focus on salient characteristics, such as skin color, for the purpose of social comparison and they systemically classify people into groups.

For many reasons it is important to know at what age children first become aware of ethnic and racial differences and how this awareness expands toward a deeper understanding of ethnicity and race. One reason is that awareness is a necessary precursor of attitude formation whether positive or negative. A second reason is that awareness feeds into and is fed by the child's growing self-identification. In the process of trying to know more about themselves, children increase their knowledge about others. One might expect that attitudes develop in line with self-identification, that the child develops a preference for those who are seen as similar. However, in the case of Black children, this is not so, as their early preference is often for whites. Black and White children first show their awareness at 3 and 4 years of age and it increases with age as they accurately identify people who are White and Black. There is no evidence that Black and White children differ in the age at which they acquire race awareness. However, their racial self-identification does differ. In selecting the picture or doll which looks most like them, white children perceive themselves to look similar to their racial group earlier than Black children.

There appears to be general agreement that racial attitudes begin to take shape and are observable during the preschool years; and at the same time, positive and negative feelings come to be associated with various groups. In summarizing the empirical work in this area, it can be concluded that (1) racial attitudes and racial preference appear during the preschool years in both

Black and White children, (2) both Black and White children exhibit a preference for White, but Black children, after the age of 6 or 7, express more positive attitudes toward their racial group, and (3) the way Black children feel about themselves is not related to the way they feel about their racial group.

Children's responses to racial differences occur in a context of responding to other social categories that involve cognitive components. Both race and sex are likely to be salient in preschoolers' cognitive responses. Some studies have found that sex is a more salient category than race, but most studies suggest that race is the more salient category when children classify and categorize themselves and others. The discrepancies between the results could be due to the social situation, task, diversity of the community, or geographical regions.

The effects of salience of social categories have been investigated in the framework of social schema theory and distinctiveness theory. Schema theory explains individual differences in the development of children's race stereotyping. According to the theory, the phenomenon of race stereotyping derives, in part, from race-based information processing on the basis of race associations. Once children have acquired race schemas, they interpret events in their world according to these developed schemas. Social schemas influence perception, memory, and inference. Studies have documented that children attend selectively, recall, and infer attitudes and behavior that are consistent with their stereotyped beliefs while ignoring information that is inconsistent with their beliefs. They have also documented individual differences in the tendency to use race-based schemas or the salience of such schemas.

Distinctiveness theory postulates that race will be more salient for children who are in a social environment in which they are a minority. Studies suggest that race is more salient for

people in a social environment in which they differ from most of the other people.

Racial attitudes are formed and developed in several basic ways. It might be expected that learning of racial attitudes is a result of socialization by parents, experiences in the school, and mass media. A directional set may be given to preschool children by direct and indirect instructions by their parents. Few studies, however, have examined the relationship between parents' racial attitudes and their children's attitudes. The mass media can teach or reinforce stereotypic beliefs. Research shows that portrayals are often stereotyped, and there is a small amount of evidence that they affect, children's stereotypes and attitudes. Schools and neighborhoods seem to play a role in children's development of racial attitudes. Integrated settings, in most cases, produce contact that reduces stereotyping and negative attitudes. Interventions that model positive attitudes toward Blacks can lead to children's increased positive attitudes toward Blacks.

Limitations

It is important to point out several limitations of this research. First, the majority of the studies of children's attitudes systematically examined only one race feature, skin color, and most used stimuli representing only two racial groups -- Blacks and Whites. Second, most research on the development of racial attitudes has been conducted with preschoolers and kindergartners; the limited evidence suggests a moderation of extreme attitudes in middle childhood. This is important because certain social, emotional and cognitive capabilities may be absent in children under 7 years, not because they are unbiased but because they are cognitively less able to generalize. Third, very few studies have examined the salience of race in various social situations and its relation to affect and behavior. Finally, there is a lack of research on the effects of

socialization on attitudes.

Future Research

Several issues emerge from the available research that would be profitable directions for future research: (1) How do children understand race? What types of cues do children use other than skin color? How do they interpret variations in skin color that occur within racial groups? When do children understand the perceptual cues of race, and when do they understand race as a social category?; (2) Developmental changes beyond preschool could be usefully investigated further. It might be expected that after age 6 or 7 years, children's attitudes become more consistent, crystallized and global; (3) What is the effect of family, community, media, and school on children's development of racial attitudes? Perhaps the most widely held belief about formation of racial attitudes is that children adopt their parents' attitudes, but there are many unanswered questions about when, if, or how parents influence children's attitudes and behavior; (4) Is race more salient, and are there differences in the processing of race-related information for children who attend a segregated school, an integrated school which includes an equal percentage of racial groups, or an integrated school in which there is a majority racial group and a minority racial group?; (5) Studies that examined the salience of race have demonstrated varying salience of different social categories but there are no studies that varied the social setting or environment and asked children to sort by social categories based on the social settings. Would race be more salient in some social settings than others?; and (6) Are children's racial attitudes related to their behavior toward members of racial groups?

Finally, it would be quite useful to examine the effects of interventions teaching children positive attitudes and behaviors on children's racial and behavior attitudes. Practice in multiple-

classification, cooperative learning activities in the classroom, or a Multicultural curriculum that provides ample opportunity for group interaction would be interesting to explore. Programs that combine exposure to information with group projects about different ethnic groups and skill development may improve race relations among children. In such research, interventions should be evaluated in relation to the age-related concerns of the children, to the process that is dominant both affective and cognitive aspects of the topic might be considered as well as the focus of attention (self, groups, individuals). The development and testing of solid interventions could contribute to reducing an important social problem as well as to a better understanding of the processes by which attitudes and behaviors are changed.

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